

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, RO

SUBJECT: MID-TERM REVIEW: IREX-NCST MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

REF: BUCAREST 6287

1. IREX DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MATTHEWS CALLED CU/EE JAN 2 TO REQUEST THAT IREX PARTICIPATE IN FEBRUARY MID-TERM REVIEW TALKS. THIS IS REVERSAL OF EARLIER IREX POSITION WHEN MATTEW HAD INDICATED IREX DID NOT HAVE ANYTHING FOR DEPT TO RAISE DURING TALKS, BUT WOULD LIKE NCST REPRESENTATIVE WHO COMES FOR TALKS SPEND DAY OR TWO IN NEW YORK TO DISCUSS PROBLEMS DESCRIBED REFTEL. MATTHEWS THOUGHT IREX-NCST BUSINESS COULD BE COVERED IN ABOUT TWO HOURS IN TALKS. DEPT OFF AGREED TO CHECK OUT QUESTION OF IREX PARTICIPATION AND REPORT BACK.

2. CU/EE BELIEVES IT INADVISABLE FOR IREX TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT TALKS FOR FOLLOWING REASONS:

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-- IREX, UNLIKE OTHER AGENCIES/DEPARTMENTS MENTIONED IN ARTICLE II, IS NOT ELEMENT OF USG (NAS IS OF COURSE SPECIAL CASE);

-- THERE ARE NO DEPARTMENT FUNDS IN IREX ROMANIAN PROGRAM;
-- IREX MAKES EVERY EFFORT TO MAINTAIN FULL AUTONOMY IN ITS ROMANIAN AND OTHER EE PROGRAMS, AND NEITHER SEEKS NOR ACCEPTS POLICY GUIDANCE FROM DEPARTMENT;

-- IN CASE OF IREX SOVIET PROGRAMS, ALTHOUGH THESE ARE OFFICIAL PROGRAMS, CONDUCTED UNDER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT AND SUPPORTED WITH DEPARTMENT FUNDS, IREX HAS NEVER PARTICIPATED IN ANNUAL REVIEW TALKS AND HAS NOT SOUGHT TO DO SO; SOVDEL AT DECEMBER REVIEW TALKS MET SEPARATELY WITH IREX IN NEW YORK AFTER COMPLETION OF TALKS WITH DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON;

-- IREX PARTICIPATION WOULD SET PRECEDENT FOR OTHER EE COUNTRY REVIEW TALKS; FYI. WE ARE NOT PLANNING TO INCLUDE IREX PROGRAMS IN AGREEMENTS CURRENTLY UNDER NEGOTIATION WITH OTHER EE COUNTRIES. END FYI;

-- IREX PARTICIPATION WOULD ALSO SET PRECEDENT FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER PRIVATE EXCHANGES TO PARTICIPATE, THUS TURNING FUTURE REVIEW TALKS INTO MUCH LARGER UNDERTAKING THAN THEY HAVE ALREADY BECOME;

- WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT IREX PROGRAM CONSTITUTES IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF OVERALL U.S. EXCHANGE ACTIVITY WITH ROMANIA, IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW IREX PARTICIPATION IN OFFICIAL REVIEW TALKS WOULD PRODUCE MORE USEFUL RESULTS THAN WOULD COME ABOUT IN SEPARATE MEETING WITH NCST REPRESENTATIVES.

3. ALTHOUGH ROMANIANS MAY WISH TO BRING PRIVATE EXCHANGES UNDER AGREEMENT UMBRELLA, WE BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE CONTRARY TO OUR INTERESTS, AND SHOULD NOT BE ENCOURAGED. OUR OBJECTIVE IN EE EXCHANGES IS TO DECREASE NOT INCREASE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE AND FUNDING VIS-A-VIS PRIVATE EXCHANGES.

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4. DEPT THEREFORE PLANS INFORM IREX THAT WE BELIEVE IT SHOULD MEET SEPARATELY WITH NCST REPRESENTATIVE/S, AS IN THE PAST, AND AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED. EMBASSY'S COMMENTS REQUESTED.

5. FYI. CU/EE DIRECTOR WILL BRIEF PAO IN VIENNA ON COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH IREX WHICH, IN ADDITION TO

AUOVE, HAS BROAD IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE FUNDING OF
EE EXCHANGES. END FYI. KISSINGER

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